

PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN

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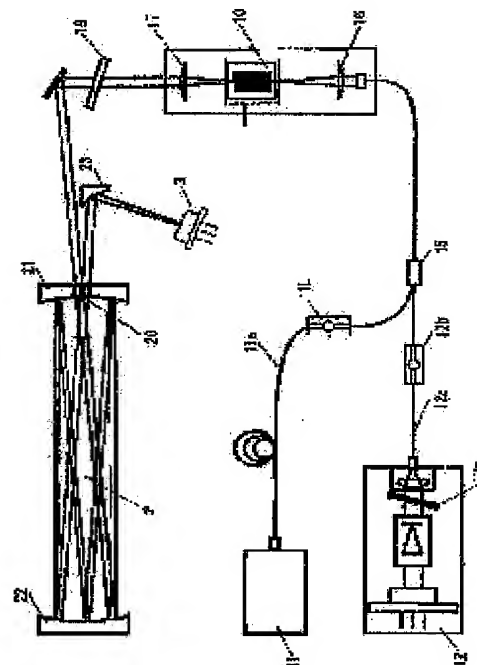
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(54) INFRARED LASER COMPONENT DETECTOR

(57)Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To provide a detector for optically detecting a trace gas content reduced in weight and volume to a ppb (10⁻⁹) level, by improving operability and environment resistance of the device.

SOLUTION: After a first laser beam having a spectral line in a first wavelength area and a second laser beam having a spectral line in a wavelength area of a shorter/longer wavelength than the first wavelength are guided via isolators 11b and 12b and optical fibers 11a and 12a, so as to be multiplexed by means of an optical multiplexer 15, a narrow-band laser beam is produced in a intermediate infrared area (2-9 μm) by means of a difference frequency producing nonlinear optical crystal 10, and on the basis of absorption based on the trace gas constituent in the narrow-band laser beam, the trace gas constituent is detected and its quantity is determined. The wavelength area of the second laser beam is varied by means of an external controller 6 so as to be synchronized with the absorption wavelength of the trace gas content to be detected, and consequently, component detection and quantity determination can be carried out.



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[Claim(s)]

[Claim 1] Infrared-laser component detection equipment which is made to generate a narrow-band laser beam in an inside infrared field (2-9 micrometers) with the nonlinear optical crystal for difference frequency generations, and detects and carries out the quantum of the minute amount gas constituents based on absorption by the minute amount gas constituents of this narrow-band laser beam after carrying out the light guide of the 1st laser beam which has the spectral line in the 1st wavelength region, and the 2nd laser beam which has the spectral line on short wavelength or long wavelength from the wavelength region of the above 1st through an isolator and an optical fiber and multiplexing with an optical multiplexing vessel.

[Claim 2] Infrared laser component detection equipment according to claim 1 which is aligned with the absorption wavelength of the minute amount gas constituents which wavelength should be changed and should detect the wavelength of the 2nd laser beam with external-control equipment, and considers a quantum as component detection.

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Field of the Invention] About the equipment which detects optically the minute amount gas constituents of ppb (10⁻⁹) level using the laser beam of the absorption region wavelength of detected gas, especially, this invention controls the wavelength of a laser beam, and based on the absorption effect of the laser beam which aligned with the absorption region of oscillating revolution transition of the specific gas molecule which exists in each wavelength field, it constitutes it so that specification of various minute amount gas and the quantum of concentration may be carried out to real time.

[0002]

[Description of the Prior Art] In recent years, the monitor and detection of ppb (10⁻⁹) level of minute amount gas are important on environmental sanitation. For example, the interest is attracted until which is emitted at a city, the farm village section, and works or it results in the monitor of a station environment from the field about physiology and global warming further.

[0003] As the detection approach of the minute amount gas constituents of ppb (10⁻⁹) level, a gas chromatograph, a liquid chromatograph, a mass spectrometry or the equipment that analyzes the minute amount gas constituents which used these together, and electrochemical analysis are known conventionally. However, also in which approach, since the lead time (it is sometimes about ten - 20 days) of pretreatments, such as concentration of a sample, was also required in order for a quantum to take a certain amount of time amount (about 30 minutes) and to raise dependability, detection of real time was difficult.

[0004]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention] Although real-time detection of minute amount gas constituents is theoretically possible, in case the detection approach based on fluorescence, dispersion, absorption, etc. by the laser beam detects a certain kind of minute amount gas constituents, it needs to double the output wavelength of laser with the absorption region of a matter proper.

[0005] The laser component which emits the laser beam of the infrared region in direct in an inside infrared region, using a lead semi-conductor as laser which can change output wavelength, and the optical parametric oscillator are known.

[0006] Since output wavelength was changed by operating at the low temperature of about 77 degrees K, and adjusting operating temperature, actuation of changing output wavelength was difficult for the laser component using a lead semi-conductor, and it required time amount, and even if it could carry out in the laboratory, it was inapplicable to environmental measurement as practical use equipment.

[0007] Moreover, while emanating, the spectral band width of the optical parametric oscillator of an infrared light line was wide, and its equipment was large-sized and it did not fit exact measurement of minute amount gas.

[0008] Then, while this invention performs real-time measurement, in order to raise the resistance to environment of equipment and to mitigate weight and the volume To the laser light source to which

output wavelength is changed between two laser light sources which generate the laser beam of difference frequency among the component parts of the equipment which generates a laser beam For the component which mixes two beams of light, using the semiconductor laser component which adjusts an energization current and can change output wavelength The nonlinear optical crystal for difference frequency generations to which it has a nonlinear characteristic in a broadband and it is not necessary to change whenever [over a crystal / incident angle] (For example, Periodically Poled Lithium Niobate:LiNbO₃:period reversal mold lithium niobate) is used. Furthermore, the optical fiber for a communication link is used for the components concerning the light guide of a laser beam, it constitutes so that an optical mirror and large mounting of weight may not be used as much as possible, and real-time measurement is enabled.

[0009]

[Means for Solving the Problem] The 1st laser beam to which the infrared laser component detection equipment of this invention has the spectral line in the 1st wavelength region, The 2nd laser beam which has the spectral line on short wavelength or long wavelength from the 1st wavelength region Isolator 11b, After carrying out a light guide through 12b and optical fibers 11a and 12a and multiplexing with the optical multiplexing vessel 15, A narrow-band laser beam is generated in an inside infrared field (2-9 micrometers) with the nonlinear optical crystal 10 for difference frequency generations, and the quantum of the minute amount gas constituents is detected and carried out based on absorption by the minute amount gas constituents of this narrow-band laser beam.

[0010] Moreover, it can be made to be able to align with the absorption wavelength of the minute amount gas constituents which the output wavelength of the 2nd laser beam should be changed with external-control equipment, and should detect it, and component detection and a quantum can be carried out.

[0011]

[Embodiment of the Invention] The infrared laser component detector of this invention possesses the laser beam generating section which generates the laser beam which aligned with the absorption line of detected gas, the detected space 2 to which the multiple echo of between reflecting mirrors 21 and 22 was carried out and detected gas was [space] full of this laser beam, and the optoelectric transducer 3 which detects the reinforcement of the laser beam by which the multiple echo was carried out, as shown in drawing 1 .

[0012] The laser beam generating section For example, the 1st laser light source 11 which outputs a wavelength $\lambda_1=1.06\text{micrometer}$ laser beam, The 2nd laser light source 12 which can change output wavelength focusing on wavelength $\lambda_2=1.57\text{micrometer}$, The optical multiplexing machine 15 to which two laser beams outputted from these two laser light sources 11 and 12 are led through optical fibers 11a and 12a and optical isolators 11b and 12b, The lens 16 which converges the laser beam multiplexed and outputted with this optical multiplexing vessel 15, The nonlinear optical crystal 10 for difference frequency generations which this laser beam that converged carries out incidence, and outputs the wavelength component of the difference of the wavelength of two laser beams which carried out incidence, It is constituted by the collimate lens 17 which makes a parallel ray the beam of light outputted from this nonlinear optical crystal 10 for difference frequency generations, and the filter 18 which passes a long wavelength component (2-9 micrometers) among the beams of light outputted from the nonlinear optical crystal 10 for difference frequency generations.

[0013] As an output wavelength region is shown in drawing 2 as the 2nd laser light source 12 which may change The wavelength adjustable semiconductor laser diode components 31-3n arranged circularly, The optical fibers 41-4n to which an each laser diode components [31-3n] output beam of light is led, The optical change-over machine 4 which switches an each optical fibers [41-4n] point one by one, and is led to optical-fiber 12a, The laser light source constituted by this change-over switch (not shown) that interlocks optical change-over machine 4 and is energized for one laser diode component, and the control unit (not shown) which controls an energization current to the set point can be used. Moreover, instead of using the optical change-over machine 4, the head of optical-fiber 12a may be put in one each

laser diode components [31-3n] irradiation hole, and may be changed.

[0014] The range to which the wavelength of one wavelength adjustable semiconductor laser diode component may be changed is few (about 0.001-0.010 micrometers), and is several times the wavelength range which includes the absorption region A of drawing 4 , and the transparency region B about one kind of gas. Therefore, if the class of measured gas changes, the class of wavelength adjustable semiconductor laser component must be changed.

[0015] Then, two or more laser diode components 31-3n As shown in spectral characteristics curvilinear drawing of drawing 3 , output wavelength regions are two or more different laser diode components small [every]. Each laser diode component By connecting the optical change-over machine 4 and a change-over switch 5 possible [to extent which can cover between the spectrums which each adjoin by adjusting an energization current / output wavelength] and interlocked with [extent] Out of each laser diode components 31-3n, one laser diode component is chosen, and can be operated, and the laser beam of request wavelength can be made to output by adjusting the energization current and changing output wavelength. Moreover, 12g of diffraction gratings can be prepared as a means to change the output wavelength of a laser diode component, and output wavelength can be changed by adjusting the include angle to the optical axis of 12g of this diffraction grating.

[0016] Furthermore, the laser diode component suitable for detected gas is chosen, the control unit using a computer adjusts an energization current, and the laser beam of request wavelength makes output by storing in the memory of a computer the table of the data in which the number of the laser diode component which emits light in the laser beam of wavelength suitable for detection of two or more detected gas constituents and each gas constituents, and relation with the energization current are shown, and inputting the class of detected gas.

[0017] The nonlinear optical crystal 10 for difference frequency generations is a nonlinear optical crystal. From the photon of two high frequencies If conditions which the conversion process ($\lambda_1, \lambda_2 \rightarrow \lambda_3$, an example: 1000nm - 1500 nm \rightarrow 3000nm) which generates one low energy photon produces are set up By choosing suitably the wavelength of the 1st laser beam (wavelength $\lambda_1=1\text{micrometer}$) and the 2nd laser beam (wavelength $\lambda_2=1.5\text{-}3.0\text{micrometer}$), the laser beam of a narrow-band is obtained in an inside infrared field (2-9 micrometers), it can be made to be able to align with the absorption region of detected gas, and change of optical reinforcement can be obtained.

[0018] In addition, optical isolators 11b and 12b are formed in order to prevent that the reflected light of a laser beam carries out incidence to laser light sources 11 and 12, and makes laser light sources 11 and 12 instability.

[0019] The 1st concave mirror 21 which the detected space 2 is space made full of detected gas, and has a bore 20 in the center section, After carrying out the multiple echo of the laser beam of an infrared field between two concave mirrors 21 and 22 while having this 1st concave mirror 21 and the 2nd concave mirror 22 which countered and carrying out incidence in the direction of slant through the bore 20 of the 1st concave mirror 21, Make it output in the direction of slant from the bore 20 of the 1st concave mirror 21, and it is made to reflect with a reflecting mirror 23, and it is constituted so that incidence may be carried out to an optical detector (optoelectric transducer) 3.

[0020] Next, the procedure which measures the detected gas concentration which exists in the detected space 2 using the infrared laser component detector constituted in this way is explained.

[0021] The detected space 2 makes detected gas full, if the gas constituents which want to operate and detect the keyboard of a control device 6 are inputted, will select the laser diode component of the 2nd laser light source 12 corresponding to the inputted gas constituents, and will set the energization current as the value of request wavelength.

[0022] And if the 1st laser light source 11 and the 2nd laser light source 12 are operated For example, a 1.06-micrometer laser beam is outputted from the 1st laser light source 11. Since the laser beam of the single spectrum to which wavelength may be changed focusing on 1.57 micrometers from the 2nd laser light source 12 is outputted Lead these two laser beams to the optical multiplexing machine 15 through

optical fibers 11a and 12a, and it is made to multiplex. The laser beam of the wavelength component of the difference of the wavelength of two laser beams to which it converged with the lens 16, and incidence of the laser beam it was multiplexed [laser beam] was carried out to the nonlinear optical crystal 10 for difference frequency generations, and it carried out incidence is made to output. As shown in transparency spectrum curvilinear drawing of drawing 4 , the wavelength of the laser beam outputted from this nonlinear optical crystal 10 can be made in agreement with the absorption region A of the narrow-band absorbed by detected gas, or can be changed to the transparency region B from which it separated from this absorption region A.

[0023] After it makes the detected space 2 carry out incidence of the laser beam outputted from this nonlinear optical crystal 10 through the bore 20 of the 1st concave mirror 21 and it carries out a multiple echo between the 1st concave mirror 21 and the 2nd concave mirror 22, make it output in the direction of slant with the 1st concave mirror 21, it is made to reflect with a reflecting mirror 23, and incidence is carried out to an optical detector 3. this -- **, if it <TXF FR=0001 HE=155 WI=080 LX=0200 LY=0300> comes and detected gas exists in the detected space 2 Since the laser beam of the absorption region A outputted from the nonlinear optical crystal 10 is absorbed and the laser beam of the transparency region B is not absorbed If change the absorbed amount in these absorption regions A and the transparency region B into an electrical signal with an optical detector 3, it is made to input into a control unit 6 and both ratio is obtained, this ratio corresponds to the concentration of detected gas.

[0024] In a control unit 6, perform data processing which changes into gas concentration the electrical signal outputted from the optical detector 3 in an absorption region A and the transparency region B, and it is made to display on a drop by computer based on the principle of Lambert-Beer that the change on the strength by absorption of the laser beam which passes the absorption medium of fixed concentration decreases exponentially to transparency distance, or a printout is carried out by the printer.

[0025] When detected gas is strange, the data corresponding to two or more detected gas constituents stored in memory by the control device 6 are read one by one, sequential change of the output wavelength of the 2nd laser light source 12 is carried out, and it scans on the absorption wavelength of all the detected gas that exists in the detected space 2. And what is necessary is to perform data processing which changes into gas concentration the electrical signal outputted from the optical detector 3 for every wavelength, and to make it display on a drop, or just to carry out a printout by the printer.

[0026]

[Effect of the Invention] According to this invention, so that clearly from the explanation based on the gestalt of the above operation by computer control The lead time for being able to measure the concentration of desired detected gas, and making the wavelength of the 2nd laser beam scan, and detecting the following gas molecule from one gas molecule Since it becomes short with about several seconds, even if the minute amount gas of strange varieties exists, it becomes measurable [real time] with one equipment.

[0027] Since attach an optical-fiber coupler in a laser light source, there is no location gap of the optical system by an oscillation or the temperature change since direct continuation of the optical fiber for a communication link is carried out, and it becomes what has high dependability and the degree of freedom of arrangement of a laser light source increases within the limits of the bending degree of freedom of a fiber further, while becoming *****, lightweight-ization by the cutback of components mark can also be performed.

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装置15と、この光合波長5で合波されて出力されるレーザ光線を選択するレンズ16と、この集束されたレーザ光線が入射し、入射した2つのレーザ光線の波長の差の波長成分を出力する差周波発生用非線形光学結晶10と、この差周波発生用非線形光学結晶10から出力される光線を平行光線にするコリメート・レンズ17と、差周波発生用非線形光学結晶10から出力される光線のうち、長波長成分(2~9μm)を通過させるフィルタ18により構成されている。

【0013】出力波長域を変化し得る第2レーザ光源12として、図2に示すように、円形に配列された波長可変半導体レーザ・ダイオード素子31~3nと、各レーザ・ダイオード素子31~3nの出力光線を導く光ファイバ41~4nと、各光ファイバ41~4nの先端部を順次切り換えて光ファイバ12aに導く光切換器4と、この光切換器4を制御して1つのレーザ・ダイオード素子に電流を供給する切換スイッチ(図示せず)と、通電電流を制御する制御装置(図示せず)とにより構成されるレーザ光源を使用することができ、また、光切換器4を使用する代わりに、光ファイバ12aの先端部、各レーザ・ダイオード素子31~3nの1つの放射口に挿入してよいのである。

【0014】1つの波長可変半導体レーザ・ダイオード素子の波長を変化させる得る範囲は、僅かに0.001~0.010μmの波長、1種類のガスについて、図4の吸収域Aと透過域Bとを含む波長範囲の数倍に過ぎない。したがって、被検知ガスの濃度が変わると、波長可変半導体レーザ素子の種類を変更しなければならぬ。

【0015】そこで、複数のレーザ・ダイオード素子31~3nは、図3のスペクトル特性曲線図に示すように、出力波長域が僅かづつ異なる複数のレーザ・ダイオード素子であって、各レーザ・ダイオード素子は、通電電流を制御することにより各隣接するスペクトル間隔をカバーし、連続する光切換器4および光切換スイッチ5を接続することにより、各レーザ・ダイオード素子31~3nの中から1つのレーザ・ダイオード素子を選択して動作させ、その通電電流を調整して出力波長を調整させることができ、により所望波長のレーザ光線を出力させることができる。また、レーザ・ダイオード素子の出力波長を変化させる手段として、同所後子12gを設け、この同所後子12gの光軸に対する角度を調整することにより出力波長を変化させることができる。

【0016】さらに、複数の被検知ガス成分、各ガス成分の検出に適した波長のレーザ光線を出力するレーザ・ダイオード素子の番号およびその通電電流との関係を示すデータのテーブルをコンピュータに格納しておき、被検知ガスの種類を入力することにより、検出出力ガスに被検知レーザ・ダイオード素子を選択して、コンピュータを用いた制御装置により通電電流の調整を行

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き、被検知空間2に被検知ガスが存在すると、非線形光学結晶10から出力された吸収域Aのレーザ光線は吸収され、透過域Bのレーザ光線は吸収されないで、これら吸収域Aおよび透過域Bにおける吸収量を光検知器3で電気信号に変換して制御装置8に入力させ、両者の比を得ると、この比が被検知ガスの濃度に対応する。

【0024】制御装置8においては、一定濃度の吸収量を通過するレーザ光線の吸収による透過変化が、透過面に対して透過率に減少するといふ Lambert-Beer の法則に基づき、コンピュータによって、吸収域Aおよび透過域Bにおける光検知器3から出力された電気信号をガス濃度に変換する演算処理を行って表示器に表示させるが、プリンタにより印字出力させる。

【0025】被検知ガスが未知の場合には、制御装置8によりメモリに格納されている複数の被検知ガス成分に対応するデータを順次読み出し、第2レーザ光源12の出力波長を順次変化させて、被検知空間2に存在するすべての被検知ガスの吸収波長を走査する。そして、各波長ごとに光検知器3から出力された電気信号をガス濃度に変換する演算処理を行って表示器に表示させるか、プリンタにより印字出力させればよいのである。

【0026】

【発明の効果】以上の実施の形態に基づき説明から明らかなように、この発明によると、コンピュータ制御により、所望の被検知ガスの濃度を測定することができ、また、第2レーザ光源の波長を走査させて、1つのガス分子から次のガス分子を抽出するためのリードタイムは、数秒程度と短くするため、未知の多種類の検出ガスが存在しても、1つの装置でリアルタイムの制御が可能となる。

【0027】レーザ光源に光ファイバ結合器を取り付

(4)

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※ けて、通信用光ファイバを直接接続するので振動や温度変化による光学系の位置ずれがなく、信頼性の高いものとより、ファイバの曲げ自由度の範囲内で、レーザ光源の配置の自由度が増すので、省空間になることにも、部品点数の削減による軽量化もできる。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】この発明の赤外線レーザ成分検出装置の実施の形態を示す概略図。

【図2】図1に示す装置で用いる可変波長レーザ光源の一例を示す原理図。

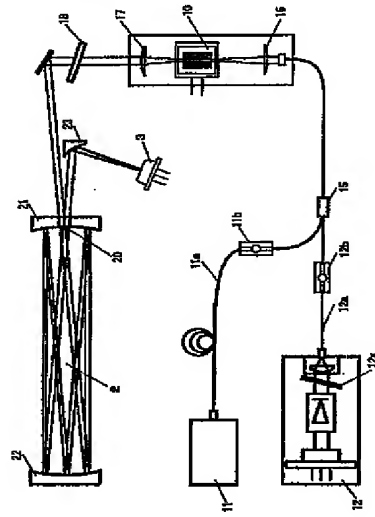
【図3】図2に示す可変波長レーザ光源から放射されるレーザ光線のスペクトル特性曲線図。

【図4】被検知ガスの波長と透過率の関係の一例を示すスペクトル特性曲線図である。

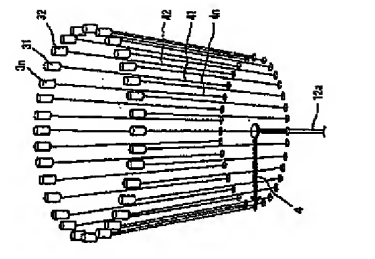
【符号の説明】

- 1 レーザ光線発生部
- 2 被検知空間
- 3 光検知器
- 4 光切換器
- 5 光切換スイッチ
- 6 制御装置
- 10 差周波発生用非線形光学結晶
- 11a, 12a レーザ光源
- 11b, 12b 光ファイバ
- 15 光合波器
- 20 選孔
- 21, 22 凹面鏡
- 24 反射鏡
- 30 31~3n レーザ・ダイオード素子

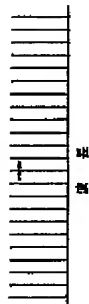
【図1】



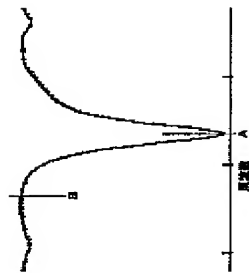
【図2】



【図3】



【図4】



フロントページの続き

Fターム(参考) 2G059 A401 B801 C020 D012 E001
FF06 FF10 G001 G002 G003
G009 H401 H006 H008 J102
J105 J111 J114 J117 J130
KK01 NN05